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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000555

SIPDIS

DOD FOR DEPSECDEF
COMCFLCC FOR SURGEON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/13/2013

TAGS: AMED AMGT ASEC KU PTER US

SUBJECT: SMALLPOX VACCINATION PROGRAM FOR DOD DEPENDENTS

Classified By: CDA FRANK C. URBANCIC, REASON: 1.5 (B) AND (D)

¶11. (U) This is an action request. See para 4.

¶12. (C) Embassy is set to begin smallpox vaccinations on Sunday, February 16. We understand that DoD has still not given its assent to inclusion of DoD dependents in this program. Of the total of approximately 145 US Mission Kuwait dependents, over 100 have already requested departure from the country under the terms of the Authorized Departure status issued by the Department of State on January 30. More are expected to depart in coming weeks, leaving a very few in country. Of these, Embassy anticipates that not more than 25, and probably fewer than that, will be dependents of DoD employees assigned to the Embassy under Chief of Mission authority.

¶13. (C) A team of medical technicians from the Department of State will visit Kuwait City February 13 - 18 to begin to administer smallpox vaccinations to Mission employees and dependents who request it. To date, however, DoD has not approved indemnification for its dependent members. This places the Ambassador in an impossible double standard situation. All Mission employees and their dependents are in Kuwait doing the work of the people of the United States. They all work in the same spaces, live in similar circumstances, and share the same risks. They all deserve equal protection against potential bio-terrorism.

¶14. (C) Action Requested: To ensure that the very few DoD dependents assigned to Kuwait City, fewer than 25 total, receive the same treatment and support from the Ambassador as those assigned from other agencies, request immediate DoD authorization to provide smallpox vaccinations program to DoD dependents in Kuwait. Please advise by immediate cable whether this request has been approved or denied in time for the team to vaccinate those DoD family members who request it NLT Monday, February 17. We understand that discussions are already ongoing on this topic in Washington and we look forward to a positive response. The Ambassador has reviewed and approved this message.
URBANCIC